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tant investigations on the subject of the twilight, based on his observations at Hamburg, Rome, Naples, and in Greece, from 1843 to 1864, obtaining very interesting results; published, as *Annals of the Athens Observatory*, important contributions to our knowledge of the physical phenomena of comets, and also on the *Physical Geography of Greece*; co-operated largely in the construction of Hour V. of the *Berlin Academy Charts*, the most elaborately worked of the series; made series of measures of the diameters of the various planets, as well as observations on Saturn's rings; and finally took a very large share in the work of position determinations of comets and asteroids.

Surely this devoted servant of science has well earned the tribute of admiration which astronomers universally pay to his memory. To make good his loss, not one, but several assiduous workers will be required in the various fields which he has so long and ardently cultivated.

Schmidt died of heart disease, being found dead in his bed, Thursday morning, February 7, 1884, after having passed the previous evening apparently in perfect health at the German Embassy at Athens. The funeral was made an occasion for national mourning, in which all classes sorrowfully participated.

GABRIEL GUSTAV VALENTIN.

GABRIEL GUSTAV VALENTIN, for forty-five years Professor of Physiology at Berne, died in that city on the 23d of May, 1883. He was born of Jewish parents, at Breslau, on the 8th of July, 1810. He took his degree in medicine in his native city in 1832, and continued to practise his profession there till 1836, when he was called to the chair of Physiology at Berne. This position he held till 1881, when he resigned on account of ill health.

During his long period of scientific activity Professor Valentin made contributions to nearly every department of Physiology. We find him, for instance, in 1842, contributing to Wagner's *Lexicon of Physiology* articles on Secretion, Animal Electricity, Nutrition, Biliary Movement, and on Galvanism in its effects on the animal body and the tissues of the human and animal body. His associates in this important scientific undertaking were the brothers Weber, Purkinje, Lehmann, Ludwig, Von Siebold, Berzelius, Bischoff, Bidder, Frerichs, Leuckart, Volkmann, and many others of that band of devoted investigators whose labors during the middle of the present century contributed so

largely to place physiology in its proper position among the experimental sciences.

A glance through the annual reports on the progress of Physiology shows that the name of Valentin appears several times in nearly every year as a contributor to the periodical literature of this science. In addition to these labors, he found time to write a text-book of physiology, which was translated into English by Dr. Brixton.

His latest work seems to have been a series of articles entitled "Histologische und Physiologische Studien," the publication of which in the *Zeitschrift für Biologie* continued as late as 1882.

CHARLES ADOLPHE WURTZ.

THE sad intelligence of the death of this distinguished French chemist, on the 12th of May, comes to us by telegraph, just as we are completing this Report, and we have no time for an extended notice. He was not elected a Foreign Honorary Member of this Academy until the last annual meeting, so that his name has not yet appeared on our printed list. His death, following so closely that of Dumas, leaves a vacancy in the ranks of the French chemists which cannot soon be filled.

Wurtz was born at Strasburg, November 16, 1817, where he was educated. He became a student in the chemical department of the medical school of his native city in 1839, and took his degree there in 1843. Soon after he moved to Paris, where he began his chemical career as assistant to Dumas, and first acquired an independent position as Professor at the Agricultural Institute at Versailles. After the death of Orfila, in 1853, and the retirement of Dumas, in 1854, their chairs were united in that of Medical Chemistry, and given to Wurtz. He became Dean of the Medical Faculty in 1866, and subsequently was elected Professor of Chemistry at the Sorbonne.

It is, however, with the Medical School in Paris that Wurtz is chiefly identified, and his investigations were carried on in the laboratory of that institution. Under the influence of Laurent and Gerhardt, Wurtz's studies were early directed towards organic chemistry; and to him is due, in no small measure, the development of modern structural chemistry. Almost at the outset of his career, he discovered the remarkable reaction by which the primary amines are produced from the cyanates of the alcohol radicals, and thus gave prominence and greater definiteness to the ammonia type of chemical compounds.